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To Tell Or Not To Tell

CIA: THE INSIDE STORY
 By Andrew Tully Morrow
 \$1.50

BY FREDERICK YEISER

It would be a grave error to regard Andrew Tully's book about the Central Intelligence Agency as an expose. One need go no farther, indeed, than the author's acknowledgment of gratitude to the White House, to Allen Dulles, to John Stanley Grogan, CIA's press director, and to other officials of the government to realize that it wished this story to appear. Reading on, one becomes convinced that the book could not have been written without official consent.

But this is not to imply that "CIA: The Inside Story" is either a handout or an attempt to whitewash this powerful secret organization which, after the Cuban fiasco of last year, became the target for such sharp criticism. Patently Tully was given the bitter with the sweet and a free hand in the treatment of the material. In addition, the information of public record—and presumably a substantial amount of reliable gossip—provided what he wanted for a story, astonishing as it may seem, based solidly on fact.

BOOKS

If this answers the question of how it was possible for the story to have been written, it leaves open another one: From the standpoint of security, should it have been? This is a moot question, to say the least. One of the tenets of an organization engaged in espionage is the preservation of secrecy about its set-up and methods of operation, and keeping mum as to how much it knows about the other fellow's.

Tully's book disregards this axiom, presumably with the blessing of the government. It omits few details as to what CIA does and how it does it. Departure from classical intelligence practice, however, appears to be nothing new in Washington, if one recalls President Eisenhower's unprecedented admission, after the U-2 was brought down in the Soviet Union, not only that it was gathering military information but quite right in doing so. The Russians already knew about the U-2 and were laying for it, but did not expect a statement of the sort by the President of the United States. Nor did anyone else. Tully makes a point of this.

The most plausible explanation for the appearance of a book on CIA at this particular time is to be sought in the troubled wake of the Cuban debacle, a 100% CIA operation—99%, if one includes President Kennedy's contribution, which may or may not have affected it adversely.

This was CIA's most notable failure, for in this instance its estimate of the situation in Cuba was drawn from faulty intelligence. Public reaction indicated clearly that CIA be looked into. The President appointed a committee forthwith to find out what was wrong. It recommended first that CIA desist from certain kinds of operation and confine itself to the gathering of information; second, that a new post of "Director Of Intelligence" be created to serve immediately under the President at the National Security Council level, and to supervise the independent evaluation of all intelligence collected by both



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CIA and the military services."

In view of the unfavorable publicity CIA received as a result of Cuba, Washington may have reasoned that an unbiased history of this sensitive agency from its inception shortly after World War II to the present might reassure the American public more than its revelations would aid and comfort potential enemies. This hypothesis, if any more than conjecture, is enough to cause purists in secret intelligence circles to sputter, yet it appears to be the only plausible one.

CIA, as the record shows, has as many successes as failures, if not more. In other countries, secret operations and secret intelligence are set up separately as a rule. CIA, as did its grandparent, the OSS, before it combines them under one roof. Others have found out long ago that this does not work out well. It has prompted CIA to get into too many things which have been done better elsewhere.

than a few other places, on the other hand, it has displayed a monumental talent for backing the wrong people because they appear to be the "right" people.

Tully cites enough cases to give us a fair notion of how many millions of our good dollars are finding their way to undeserving pockets. His chapter on Iran is an eye-opener. So, for that matter, are most of the others.

The same theme recurs constantly: Intelligence correct, but ignored or underestimated—as before Korea. But General MacArthur never had any use for CIA or its predecessor, OSS. (All he wanted from

the latter, he was supposed to have said at one time, was its Research and Analysis branch and its unvouchered funds.)

It will come as a surprise to most readers, I believe, that CIA has participated to such a degree in post-war international politics. The author leaves very little unsaid about these activities, thanks to copious background material on Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Southeast Asia, Formosa and the rest. Evidently, however, CIA began to grow too big for its britches. The vast "freewheeling outfit," as Tully calls it, that Allen Dulles had built up and eventually housed in a building next in size to the Pentagon was becoming a power unto itself owing to its exceptional position on not being accountable to Congress. (In some of our smaller legations CIA personnel outnumbered that of other agencies.)

Some of these activities are due for curtailment, as we've said, pursuant to the recommendations of the President's committee referred to above. It has taken cognizance, we are told, "of two major criticisms of CIA's operations: that Dulles was wedded to his own intelligence estimates even when intelligence gathered by other organizations offered contradictory evidence; and that CIA was not equipped